EVALUATION FORM
3026 - Acton/Agua Dulce Library

Overall Rating | 4 |

Ratings Summary

BOND ACT CRITERIA	RATING	
Population Growth	////	**344%**
Age and Condition	4	
Needs of residents/response of proposed project to needs	4	
Plan of service integrates appropriate technology	4	
Appropriateness of site	4	
Financial capacity (new libraries only)	////	**yes**

Non-Evaluative Comments

Residents of Acton and Agua Dulce currently receive library services from the Santa Clarita Valley Bookmobile, which is operated by the County of Los Angeles Public Library.

Project Summary

Applicant:	Los Angeles, County of
Library Jurisdiction:	County of Los Angeles Public Library
Project Type/Priority	New Construction of Library/1
Project Square Footage:	10,874
State Grant Request:	$4,613,685

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Age and Condition of Existing Library   RATING   4

Regulatory Basis: 20440, Appendices 1 & 3

	R1	R2	R3
	4	4	4

Age Rating

4 = No Existing Facility

4 = 1949 or older

3 = 1950-1959

2 = 1960-1964

1 = 1965-1974

0 = 1975-2003

	R1	R2	R3
N/A			

Structural Renovation Rating

4 = No Renovation

4 = 1954 & earlier

3 = 1955-1962

2 = 1963-1972

1 = 1973-1978

0 = 1979-2003

4 = Extremely Poor Condition	**Condition of Existing Library**		R1	R2	R3
3 = Poor condition	1. Structural	N/A			
2 = Acceptable condition	2. Lighting				
1 = Good condition	3. Energy				
0 = Very good condition	4. Health & Safety				
	5. ADA				
	6. Acoustical				
	7. Flexibility				
	8. Spatial Relationships				
	9. Site Considerations				

Rating panel comments

Library construction date: No existing library
Library renovation date:

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Needs and Response to Needs   RATING   **4**

Regulatory Basis: 20440 pp. 26, 27, 60-69

Community Library Needs Assessment

	R1	R2	R3
1. Methodology & community involvement.	3	3	4
2. Community analysis/community agencies & organizations, service area demographics	4	4	4
3. Analysis of service needs/consistency with demographics	4	3	3
4. Service limitations for existing facility (if applicable) **N/A**			
5. Space needs assessment	3	4	4
6. Executive summary includes description of K-12 student population and their needs	4	4	4

Library Plan of Service

	R1	R2	R3
7. How well project responds to needs of residents	4	4	4
8. How well project responds to needs of K-12 students as expressed in Needs Assessment	4	4	4
9. How well mission, roles, goals, objectives, service indicators are documented	3	4	3
10.How well types of services are documented	3	4	4
11. How well types of K-12 services are documented	4	4	4
12. How project fits into jurisdiction-wide Plan of Service	3	2	3

Library Building Program

	R1	R2	R3
13. How well Building Program implements Plan of Service.	4	4	4
14. How well Building Program documents general requirements for Library Building.	4	4	4
15. How well spatial relationships are described.	4	4	4
16. How well individual spaces are sized and described.	4	4	4

Conceptual Plans

	R1	R2	R3
17. How well net-assignable SF on plan matches Building Program	4	4	4
18. How well non-assignable SF on plan matches Building Program	4	4	4
19. How well spatial relationships on plan match Building Program	3	3	3

Joint Use Cooperative Agreement

	R1	R2	R3
20. How well roles & responsibilities are defined.	4	4	4
21. How clearly joint library services are described.	4	4	3
22. Appropriateness, adequacy, reasonableness of hours of service.	4	4	4
23. Appropriateness, adequacy, reasonableness of staffing/volunteers.	3	3	3
24. How well ownership issues are resolved	3	3	3
25. Appropriateness, adequacy, reasonableness of sources & uses of funding	3	3	3
26. Appropriateness, adequacy, reasonableness of review & modification process	3	3	3
27. How well agreement demonstrates a workable, mutually beneficial long-term partnership.	3	3	3

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Rating Panel Comments

R1:
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
The proposed library is located in an unincorporated area of northern Los Angeles County, an area where population growth of 256% occurred between 1980-2000 and a projected increase of 25% is slated in the next twenty years. There is a projected increase in the student population of 50% in the next twenty years. A variety of different approaches were utilized to gather input from the community--a survey to both communities (Acton and Agua Dolce) that was done in 2003--available only in English since demographic data shows a large Caucasian population; a series of focus groups in all of the public schools; 11 community meetings and focus groups with translation services available; survey sent to schools for children ages 5-14 (41.3% response rate), for teens ages 15+ (58.7% response rate); 2 design camps. Copies of survey instruments and results from focus groups are included in appendices and applicant has done a very good job at utilizing results in the narrative. Have done an excellent job at the community analysis and proposed services are responsive to identified needs. Have utilized County of Los Angeles Public Library standards in all segments of the space needs assessment and have included a range of minimum requirements and recommended sizes.

PLAN OF SERVICE
Seven service goals were identified and 4 of these relate to children and youth--pre-school, school age, teens, students. Mission statement is for the County of Los Angeles Public Library and they have included the organizational and programmatic goals for the jurisdiction. Measurable objectives are included for each goal along with a series of activities. There were no service indicators.

BUILDING PROGRAM
An excellent general requirements section both in terms of comprehensiveness and detail.

An excellent description of the library's spatial relationships both in narrative and graphic form. There were a few inconsistencies in the spatial relationships, but generally they were minor.

Outstanding and extremely well detailed space descriptions that appear to be appropriately sized.

CONCEPTUAL PLANS
The conceptual plan provides 8,919 net assignable square footage for the project, whereas the building program requires 8,710 net assignable square footage for the project. Therefore, the conceptual plan has met program requirements in net assignable square footage, and has provided 3.0% more in net assignable square footage. In comparison to the building program, there are two spaces in the conceptual plan where the net assignable square footage is less than the building program requires:

Children's OPAC, 25 sq ft. less than programmed, or a 21% deficit.
Reference Collection, Furniture and Equipment, 58 sq ft. less than programmed, or a 15% deficit.

The conceptual plan has met building program requirements exceptionally well regarding net assignable square footage.

The building program calls for a 2,211 non-assignable square footage, or 20% of the 10,921 gross square footage, and the conceptual plan delivers a 1,955 non-assignable square footage, or 18% of the 10,874 gross square footage. The plan matches program requirements regarding non-assignable square footage in an exceptional manner.

Except for a few isolated instances, the spatial relationships on the conceptual plans match exceptionally well with those defined in the program. The instances are:

Teen area, is away from, and is not close to Adult Services. (BP 6-1)

Children Services is close to Adult Services, but should be away from Adult Services according to the program. (BP 6-1)

Visual connection could hardly be established from Adult Services to the Public Entrance and Arrival areas. (BP 6-1)

Teen area is not away, but is close to Children Services. (BP 6-2)

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Information Desk is not adjacent, but is close to Children's OPAC (BP 6-13) and Children's Reference Collection (BP 6-14).

Magazines and Newspapers area is acceptably removed, but is not quite far away from the Preschool/Young Children's Collection and Seating area. The building program requires the Preschool/Young Children's Collection and Seating area to be away from the Magazines and Newspapers area. (BP 6-15)

JOINT USE AGREEMENT:
The proposed partnering effort seems to be mutually beneficial. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined as are the proposed services. The hours of service M-Tu 3:00-7:00, W-The 3:00-6:00, F 3:00-5:00, Sat 1:00-5:00 show a good blend of times and should meet the needs of students (the library is not open later in the evening), and the center will be staffed after school and on Saturdays. Staffing from the county seems generous with a Children's/Reference Librarian and two part pages. There is no staffing commitment from the district other than volunteers. There are no funding specifics provided for either party, however, the school district has indicated that they will provide and maintain 6 computers and the county will provide two computers. The review and modification process will be done by both parties on a quarterly basis during the first year and then it will continue annually. There was no indication that input from users would be included.

R2:
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Very good and varied methods were used, including surveys, 11 focus groups, 3 community meetings, and 2 design decision camps. The survey included only multiple choice questions with no provision for open-ended responses; however, the focus groups and community meetings did set up open ended questions and responses. Copies of the questions and results were provided in the appendices. The planning steps for this application are out of sequence. Since the site selection process occurred in 2001-2002, it preceded the needs assessment efforts, which took place in early 2003. In addition, the needs assessment process was completed in January 2003, but the beginning of the efforts with schools occurred in February 2003. However, the community analysis was thorough and detailed, showing that they clearly know their community. They defined many factors that would have an impact on potential library services to the community; it would have been useful to have had those connected specifically to potential service issues. They provided a very good, clear presentation of service needs that they propose to address, both traditional library services which need to be established in this new library and others that are very specific to this individual community area. They did not, however, make any specific connections between the needs they define and any specific results of the needs assessment instruments. The reader must make those connections via the detail of survey results presented in the appendices. The space needs assessment includes clear and reasonable allocations, with specific standards (LA Co. guidelines) and conversion factors provided.

PLAN OF SERVICE
The project responds extremely well to the needs assessment results, with many traditional services and some very specific to this particular community area (e.g. Community Learning Center, animal husbandry collection). The mission statement presentation was excellent, including a separate mission statement for this branch and very good connections to the county vision and goals statements. The goals are user-centered, as are most of the objectives. The objectives are also measurable, and the sample activities make the objectives and proposed services very clear. There are no separate service indicators, but the objectives statements do imply service indicators themselves and some are outcomes-based. Combining the types of service descriptions and the activities defined for each objective, the planned services are quite clear and responsive. The jurisdiction-wide "fit" is more a description of how Acton/Agua Dulce benefits from support by the county system than how this branch helps complete the library service picture for the jurisdiction as a whole.

BUILDING PROGRAM
The general requirements are an excellent combination of good, basic library design guidelines, LA Co. standards, and requirements that pertain specifically to the Acton/Agua Dulce site and service plan. It would have been good if the general requirements Telecommunications had included specific provision for wireless as well as in the Workstation section - but OK. The

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requirements Telecommunications had included specific provision for wireless as well as in the Workstation section - but OK. The spatial relationships seem reasonable, consistent, and extremely well described. The bubble diagram is pretty "busy" and may not provide a great deal of help but it's there if that is more useful to some.

CONCEPTUAL PLANS
Net-assignable space on the plans matches the building program extremely well.

Non-assignable space on the plans matches what was called for in the building program extremely well. The program called for 20% non-assignable square footage and the plan delivered 18% bringing the building in under the total gross square footage called for in the building program.

The conceptual plan meets the spatial relationships called for in the building program very well with a few exceptions:

Adult Services is not particularly close to the Teen Area nor is there much of a visual connection from/to the "Entrance and Arrival Areas." The Adult Service is also not particularly far away from the Children's services although it is somewhat removed.

The Children's Service is not particularly far away from the Teen Area, but it is acceptably removed.

The Community Learning Center is not particularly close to the Non-Fiction Collection and seating area.

The Fiction Collection is not particularly close to the Media Viewing and Listening area.

The Information Desk is not adjacent to the Children's OPACs or the Children's Reference Collection, but it is fairly close.

The location of the Magazine Collection and Seating in relation to the flow of patrons to the information desk, and the adult services and major collections area is unfortunate in that it appears to impede access. The high level of traffic through the magazines area will also be disturbing to users of that area.

The Adult OPAC is not close to the Children's Library Entrance

JOINT USE AGREEMENT
The roles, responsibilities, and joint services are extremely clear and well-defined, including formal assistance and independent usage. The hours of service provide an excellent mix of afternoon, evening, and weekend hours. They are providing 40 hours per week of Library Page staffing and additional volunteers, as well as some time of a Children's/Reference Librarian to cover 20 hours per week of staffed center assistance - an excellent ratio. It appears that pages and volunteers will be expected to perform the duties that are typically performed by librarians, but this is still very good as defined. No dollar commitments nor estimates are provided, but the contributions by the library are significant and those by the district (e.g. 6 computers, etc. and homework-related materials) are definitely good additions to support service provision. The review and modification process seems quite good, except that it is not clear that any user input is provided for. Some staffing contribution by the district would make the center even more responsive to student-specific needs and issues, and would serve to strengthen the workability of a potential long-term partnership.

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R3:
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
There is broad community support for the project, with a Friends group forming in 1999. The group created a library planning advisory committee that was instrumental in obtaining support from the board of supervisors for the library. The planning process included a strong effort to reach the residents of the community and included focus groups; a written survey distributed within the community and school, as well as being published in the local newspaper; and community meetings, which resulted in a broad representation of community residents. Bookmobile use statistics were also studied to determine current use patterns. The community analysis was thorough, containing both graphic and narrative description and comparison of statistical information. Analysis of library service needs follows the needs assessment findings for the most part, but there is not a clear link to the need for materials on agriculture and animal husbandry. Demographics show a very small percentage of residents employed in those areas and no link to the needs assessment findings is clear. The space needs assessment is based on standards developed by the library system and adapted for this project; they are clearly articulated.

PLAN OF SERVICE
The services planned respond to the needs assessment findings and appear to be tailored to the community. The mission statement for the library system is broad enough to cover the needs of this library. The goals and objectives are geared toward the users but tend to be phrased in terms of usage statistics. However, the examples of activities demonstrate specific types of services intended, which respond to the user area library service needs. The description of the types of services provide a clear picture of how the services are envisioned to be carried out and should prove to be useful to the staff who will implement them.

BUILDING PROGRAM
The building program follows the spatial and programmatic needs of the library, providing well-detailed general requirements section and space sheets. Spatial relationships are clearly and consistently described, in both narrative and graphic presentations. Spatial relationships within each division are also presented.

CONCEPTUAL PLANS
There are no major issues with the net-assignable SF. The building program is extremely well represented on the plan.

The non-assignable SF in the building program is 20% and the plan is even better at 18%. The space is handled exceptionally well and the tight, efficient 18% does not detract from building operations.

Space relationships are basically very well represented, but the building is an unusual configuration which leads to some difficulty in some of the line of sight requirements. It would have been interesting to see how the non-assigned space was allocated to show the traffic patterns that are assumed. The following problematic items were identified:
Adult services not adjacent to children's OPAC.
Information desk not adjacent children's OPAC.
Information desk not adjacent reference collection.
Information desk not adjacent preschool collection.
Children's OPAC not adjacent information desk.
Children's entrance not away from teen section.
Children's reference collection not adjacent information desk.
Community learning center not close to adult services.
Community learning center not close to non-fiction.
Entrance not away from staff support area.
Non-fiction not away from children's section.

JOINT USE AGREEMENT
The agreement demonstrates a long-term commitment on the part of both the library and the school district, each of whom are active participants in to the joint venture service. The hours of service are excellent, providing staff assistance each weekday from 3:00 to closing, and Saturday afternoons; it will be staffed by at least two 20-hour staff members at the level of library page. Student workers, both volunteers and employees, will also be recruited and trained. Funding is mentioned only in terms of staff positions, numbers of PCs (including a 3-year replacement schedule) and library materials, but it's clear that there is a financial commitment from both parties. The agreement will be reviewed quarterly during the first year, and annually thereafter, but no evaluation process or method of obtaining input from the users are mentioned.

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Integration of Electronic Technologies   **RATING**   4

Regulatory Basis: p.68, 20440, Appendix 4

Integration of Electronic Technologies	R1	R2	R3
1. Appropriateness of electronic technologies in Plan of Service, based on Needs Assessment	4	4	4
2. How well the integration of electronic technologies is documented in Plan of Service	4	4	4
3. How well the integration of electronic technologies is documented in the Building Program	4	4	4

Rating Panel Comments

R1:
Proposed services are extremely responsive to technology needs identified by the community. There are 20 technology workstations proposed for public use and an additional 8 in the joint center, all of which have high speed Internet access. The inclusion of a wireless network indicates that they are planning for future technological advancements. It will be possible for patrons to bring their own laptops for use in the library. There were examples of specific databases and software packages. Remote access for services will enable patrons to make use of resources even if they cannot get to the library. The implementation plan is clear and detailed, and it will be easy to use. There is a detailed discussion about the telecommunications infrastructure of the county library system

R2:
The defined electronic technologies present a clear plan which does an excellent job of supporting the defined needs and the services proposed in the plan of service. The only issue regarding the integration of appropriate technologies in the building program is access to computers by teens, since none are specified for the teen area. However, there are 8 in the Community Learning Center for their use when the center is not otherwise in use, 1 each in the nearby Media and new Book Display areas, and 3 in the relatively close reference collection and seating area, so there are probably enough. They might want to reconsider some of these placements as they move forward in the design process to ensure sufficient computer support for the teens, without their impinging on the Learning Center space nor the adults in the other areas.

R3:
The branch will provide high-speed Internet access for library patrons since most residents don't have it available due to the geographic location. A wireless LAN will be provided, as will extensive electronic resources that are available throughout the library system. Standard workstation software configurations designed for types of applications should provide outstanding software solutions, including computer-based learning activities in the homework center for students. Training in the use of technology will be provided for staff to enable them to assist library customers. Videoconferencing capability will be available in the meeting rooms, and data ports and power outlets will be provided throughout the building, including the group study rooms, for network access via patron-owned PCs. The general requirements section of the building program contains detailed coverage of telecommunications needs and will provide outstanding flexibility for implementing future technology advances.

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Site   **RATING** | 4 |

Regulatory Basis: p.39, 20440, Appendix 1

Appropriateness of Site

	R1	R2	R3
1. Equal access for all residents in service area.	4	4	3
2. Accessibility via public transit.	*N/A*		
3. Accessibility via pedestrian and bicycle.	2	2	2
4. Accessibility via automobile.	4	4	4
5. Adequacy of automobile parking.	4	4	4
6. Adequacy of bicycle parking.	4	4	4
7. Overall parking rationale.	4	4	4
8. Shared parking agreement (if applicable).	*N/A*		
9. Visibility of site & proposed library building in service area	3	3	3
10. How well site fits community context & planning	4	3	4
11. Site selection process and summary.	4	4	4

Site Description

	R1	R2	R3
12. Adequacy of size of site.	4	4	4
13. Appropriateness of site configuration	4	4	4
14. Appropriateness of site/surrounding area.	3	2	3
15. Appropriateness of site based on placement of building, parking, access roads, pathways, expansion and parking.	4	3	3

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Rating Panel Comments

Drainage issues: The library building will be constructed over a natural swale using a proven method.
Geotechnical issues: No known active faults exist on the project site; however, the San Andreas Fault is 8 kilometers away and the site will be subject to strong ground shaking. An over excavation/geogrid re-compaction method or an alternative pier structure on friction piles design is suggested due to the drainage requirements of the swale. It appears the special foundation support for the project will cost over $700,000.

R1:
This site is located in an unincorporated area of northern Los Angeles County and is slightly northeast of the geographic center of the library service area which is 178 sq. miles. It is located on Crown Valley Road, a main n/s corridor, and 900 feet north of Sierra Hwy, which is a main e/w corridor. It is very close to State Hwy 14, the Antelope Valley Fwy. It is an area where population increased 256% (1980-2000) and is projected to increase an additional 25% in the next 20 years. There is no public transit in the area. The location is between two communities, Acton and Agua Dulce, near the Acton business district, and close to the heaviest concentration of population in the service area. There is a proposed multipurpose recreation trail on Crown Valley Rd and Sierra Hwy for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. There is limited development in the area and there are no bicycle lanes or sidewalks. The site is easily accessible by automobile with on and off ramps to the Antelope Fwy which is located 1/4 mile south of the site. There are 53 on site parking spaces for automobiles (requirement of 50) with a total of 58 available spaces. There will be sheltered parking for 12 bicycles.
The proposed facility will be visible from Crown Valley Rd, Sierra Hwy, and the Antelope Valley Fwy, and the architecture is intended to harmonize with the rural context. There were other sites considered and there was input from the community through a series of meetings, surveys, and stakeholder interviews.

R2:
The site is fairly centrally located in the library service area which is a very large (178 square miles) and rural service area. The proposed site is located between the two major communities in the service area (Agua Dulce and Acton), and in fairly close proximity to the middle and high schools that serve the area.

The site is located on Crown Valley Road (2,967 vehicles per day at the site and 11,555 vehicles per day 1 block from the site south of Sierra Highway) which is a major north/south traffic corridor. It is also close to Sierra Highway (9,298 vehicles per day just west of Crown Valley Rd and 6,985 vehicles per day just east of Crown Valley Rd), a major east/west traffic corridor. The Antelope Valley Freeway (State Highway 14) is just south of Sierra Highway and runs the full length of the service area.

There is no public transit in this rural area. Because of the large size and rural nature of the service area, pedestrian and bicycle access to the site is extremely limited. There is a proposed multipurpose trail under development which will connect to the library site and there are 12 bicycle parking spaces that are covered and able to be seen from a public service desk for security purposes.

There are 53 parking spaces on site and 5 more available on street which will be more than adequate for this rural library, both now and into the foreseeable future.

The site will be highly visible on Crown Valley Road. There is some commercial development at the intersection of Crown Valley and Sierra Highway as well as Hwy 14. Along with the two nearby schools, the library will be a prominent landmark and should be very visible in the service area.

Twelve sites were reviewed with staff and a library consultant. There was community involvement in the form of focus groups and individual stakeholder interviews as well as a written survey. There were design camps and a formal public hearing and the site was selected as the best one to meet the stated site selection criteria which were listed in the application.

The application states that the site is large enough to support an expansion of both the building as well as parking in the future.

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R3:
The Acton / Agua Dulce project site is on a major arterial exit from the Antelope Valley Freeway and the Sierra Highway, on the rather busy Crown Valley road to the modest business district of Acton. Agua Dulce Canyon Road, serving the other modestly populated part of the 178 sq. mi. service area, is a bit distant, some three exits to the west from the Antelope Valley Freeway. (The bifurcated service area makes perfectly equal access impossible.)

Not surprisingly, there is no public transit in this sparsely populated area. There is a planned bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trail in the area, and a hitching post (unsheltered and unsupervised) is planned for the library site together with 12 covered bicycle slots. The country roads should be feasible for pedestrians and bicycles, when autos are not available, since bicycle lanes and sidewalks are not a feature of the area. Crown Valley Rd. leads under the freeway to a nearby school, feasible for bikes and walkers. Parking meets code. Limited overflow parking is allowed on the shoulder of Crown Valley Rd.

The 25' roof peak should be prominent in the landscape, but is set well back from the road, and has no distinguishing lantern or other feature to call attention to it from Sierra Hwy. or the freeway, although as noted on App. p. 13 it is clearly visible from those roadways. Regardless, the site is reasonable, provides a welcome upgrading from the bookmobile stops now in the area, and will enhance the present and planned schools at the Sierra Hwy. - Crown Valley Rd. intersection.

A number of alternative sites were considered by staff, consultants and public before adopting the proposed site. The rationale for selection is clearly presented and sensible. The site is 6X footprint (!), allowing more than ample room for expansion. Its rectangular shape makes it easy to work with. The proximity to the arterial intersection is desirable, and build-up of the commercial and educational facilities at the intersection will make it even more attractive. This reviewer feels that putting the footprint closer to Crown Valley Rd. would have enhanced its visibility and minimized the loss of presence caused by viewing the elevation over a sea of autos, not unlike a car dealership.

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Financial Capacity

Regulatory Basis: Bond Act p. 5, Section 19998 (a) (7)

Rating Panel Comments:

Applicant has committed to the on-going operation of the completed library.